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Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on HB 5277 “AN ACT CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR MEDICAL DIAGNOSTIC EQUIPMENT THAT PROMOTES ACCESSIBILITY IN HEALTH CARE FACILITIES.

I can personally sum up my experience with Accessible Medical Diagnostic Equipment, (A MDE) by saying that the only piece of accessible medical equipment that I’ve actually seen in Connecticut is a rolling chair for ophthalmology examinations where the chair on wheels can be rolled out of the way, and myself a as person in a wheelchair can occupy that space. Professionally, I can tell you that women with disabilities experience issues when attempting to obtain gynecological care and mammography services. For example, I am aware of an accessible gynecological table at St. Francis, not because I discovered it professionally, but because during my career as a social worker, I had several women with disabilities ask me where they might be able to obtain appropriate gynecological care. I found out about the table by asking women with disabilities that I knew about where they obtained gynecological care that met their needs.

As recently as 2021, the National Council on Disability released a report entitled” Enforceable Accessible Medical Equipment Standards” that I have attached to my testimony. In particular, I

would direct the interested parties to page 29 of the PDF document which outlines a history of federal efforts in this area. Suffice to say as a person with a disability, if we wait for the federal government to act, we will be waiting a long time.

I will leave you with a personal story around this issue. I once went to a major radiology provider. For reasons that I cannot recall I was required to take several steps to get on the x-ray table. Upon seeing my unsteady gait, a member of the staff said "I'm going to put a note in your file that says that the next time you need an x-ray, you need to get it at the hospital. After the x-ray, I heard the staff say "The x-ray looks good, let's get him out of here!" I recognize that passage of new legislation is usually a years-long endeavor. I encourage this legislation to be passed sooner rather than later.